MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress Assembled:

Your petitioners, the young men of the Territory of Utah respectfully represent: That our present interests and future prospects in life are dependent upon the undisturbed peace and prosperity of our Territory.

That we are the sons of parents who have braved the dangers and overcome the difficulties incident to pioneering and settling a new, sterile and forbidding country; who have made human habitation in the valleys of the great Rocky Mountain basin a possibility; who have labored with untiring industry under many hardships to create homes for their families, in which we have been nurtured and cared for; who have denied themselves many comforts to educate and train their children in useful arts and industries; who have ever thrown around our paths in life the benign influences of home—there are no homeless children in Utah—of religion, of industry, of honor, of patriotism and the broadest and kindest expressions of humanity; who have shielded us from the groveling forms of vice, that tempt and allure to destruction the unprotected and disowned, who, without name or home, lie in the streets of the great cities and upon the highways of the outside world, a reproach to civilization and mankind.

Under the protection, wise legislation and humane administration of our fathers, our Territory enjoys the blessings of peace and abundance, and we have been started upon the highroad of prosperity and success with bodies untainted by disease, with hearts in which faith and the consciousness of divine approval dwell, with minds open to conviction of truth and untrammelled by dogmas or superstitions that clog progressive thought and fill the soul with fear. We love and honor our parents, who have thus provided in our childhood for our welfare in active life.

Now, therefore, in duty to them and ourselves, having the continued peace and prosperity of our Territory at heart and valuing liberty and the rights of conscience above life, we, the young men of Utah, earnestly remonstrate against the calumnies and misrepresentations of unprincipled men, who would have the world believe that we are curtailed in the enjoyment of American freedom and fettered in chains forged by priestly fanatics.

We deny that undue influence is exercised by any authority over our thoughts or actions.

We deny that duty to our religion and to our country leads us in opposite directions, or that it can possibly do so while the charter of American liberty remains the supreme law.

We deny that the religious institution of plural marriage, as practised by our parents, and to which many of us owe our existence, debases, pollutes, or in any way degrades those who enter into it. On the contrary we solemnly affirm, and challenge successful contradiction, that plural marriage is a sacred religious ordinance and that its practice has given to thousands honorable names and peaceful homes, where Christian precepts and virtuous practices have been uniformly inculcated and the spirit of human liberty and religious freedom fostered from the cradle to maturity.

In consideration of these facts, and in the name of justice we hereby solemnly memorialize your honorable body to refrain from enacting laws that reflect upon the marital relations of our parents, and that, however specific the provisions to the contrary, stigmatize us in the opinion of the world; to refrain from enacting laws that will enslave a large proportion of the citizens of our Territory, that will gall and fret the spirit of liberty which we inherit and are bound to entertain and that will take from us, for no offense, the privileges and blessings of local free government, so necessary to the happiness and well being of an American community.

We ask you to secure to us the rights, the liberties and the blessings of freemen, and to pause before foisting upon us an unrepublican government, placing strangers, by appointment, to rule over us, and sacrificing the interests, the feelings, the happiness and freedom of the great majority of the citizens of our Territory to the greed and cupidity of a reckless minority; and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

March, 1882,

Young Men's

Memorial to

Congress.